What is claimed is:

1. A method of inputting characters into a device having a data processor, a memory and a plurality of keys, including the steps of:

   a. providing, in said memory, a table of key-actuating sequences, each said sequence corresponding to a respective character;

   b. actuating said keys;

   c. detecting the sequence of actuation of said keys;

   d. matching the sequence of actuation of said keys with key-actuating sequences in said table of key-actuating sequences; and

   e. retrieving the character whose corresponding key-actuating sequence matches the sequence of actuation of said keys,

   wherein the lines joining consecutive keys of a key-actuating sequence resemble the shape of the corresponding character.

2. A method according to Claim 1 wherein the direction and path of movement among said consecutive keys of a key-actuating sequence resemble the stroke sequences of the corresponding character.

3. A method according to Claim 1 further including a step of pressing one of said keys to indicate completion of input of a character.

4. A method according to Claim 1 further including a step of pressing one of said keys to switch the mode of operation of said device.

5. A method according to Claim 1 further including a step of pressing one of said keys to clear data in a key sequence buffer.

6. A character input device having a data processor, a memory and a plurality of keys, wherein said memory includes a table of key-actuating sequences, each said sequence corresponding to a respective character; said data processor is adapted to detect the sequence of actuation of said keys, to match the sequence of actuation of said keys with key-actuating sequences in said table of key-actuating sequences, and to retrieve the character whose corresponding key-actuating sequence matches the sequence of actuation of said keys, wherein the lines joining consecutive keys of a key-actuating sequence resemble the shape of the corresponding character.

7. A device according to Claim 6 including up to five keys for inputting characters into said device.

8. A device according to Claim 7 wherein four of said five keys are respectively positioned at a north, east, south and west position.

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9. A device according to Claim 8 wherein a fifth of said five keys is operable to indicate the completion of input of a character.

10. A device according to Claim 9 wherein said fifth key is positioned among the other four keys.

5 11. A device according to Claim 6 wherein one of said keys is acutable to change the mode of operation of said device.

12. A device according to Claim 6 wherein one of said keys is actuable to clear the data in a key sequence buffer.